

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 BAGHDAD 004089

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INR/R/MR, NEA/PPD, NEA/PPA, NEA/AGS, INR/IZ, INR/P

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: IRAQI GOVERNMENT, CONSTITUTION, TERRORISM, ELECTIONS, POLITICAL PARTIES, SADDAM HUSSEIN TRIAL; BAGHDAD

SUMMARY: Discussion on the Constitution, Terrorism, Elections, Political Parties and the Saddam Hussein Trial, were the major editorial themes of the daily newspapers on October 3, 2005. END SUMMARY.

-----  
TABLE OF CONTENTS  
-----

- [1A. "No to Postponement" \(Al-Bayyan, 10/3\)](#)
- [1B. "He Who Is Without Sin" \(Al-Siyada, 10/3\)](#)
- [1C. "Ramadan and the Patience of Iraqis" \(Al-Siyada, 10/3\)](#)
- [1D. "An Invitation to End Terrorism in Iraq" \(Al-Ittihad, 10/3\)](#)
- [1E. "In American English" \(Al-Zaman, 10/3\)](#)
- [1F. "Another Definition of Democracy" \(Al-Dustoor, 10/3\)](#)

-----  
SELECTED COMMENTARIES  
-----

[1A. "No to Postponement"](#)  
(Al-Bayyan, pro-coalition and affiliated with the Islamic Al-Dawa party led by Al-Ja'afari, published this page-five editorial by Zainab Al-Khafaji)

"Saddam's defenders do not have any further justification to defend him since he confessed that he committed many crimes during his regime. All indicators about Saddam's case reveal that his lawyers will definitely fail. However, there are some international elements desperately trying to find legal justification to acquit Saddam or at least reduce his expected sentence. We have heard recently that there are some groups trying to postpone Saddam's trial; they dream that they will be able to save Saddam from divine justice.

"I think that Dr. Ibrahim Al-Ja'afari's decision to reject such a proposal has put an end to those futile dreams. All of Iraq's people will say, 'no to postponement.' This is the result of the government's interaction with people and this relationship must develop further, especially following the current terrorist activity that aims to thwart the constitutional process. Attitudes of some international groups that call for postponing Saddam's trial, using weak excuses, have been unsuccessful despite the machinery of a huge media campaign which has tried to portray Saddam as an oppressed victim who cannot enjoy any human rights.

"We insist on saying 'no to postponement' because Saddam's trial is a national demand. We reject any attempt to politicize Saddam's trial because it is purely an Iraqi affair that must not be meddled in by any other country. All documentary evidence proves that Saddam executed thousands of Iraqis and he also stole the Iraqi people's national wealth. For this reason, Saddam's trial is not a political affair that is subject to special interests but rather it's a trial that represents the whole of Iraq's people."

[1B. "He Who Is Without Sin"](#)  
(Al-Siyada, independent, published this back-page column by Hussein Al-Ubaidi)

"I do not want to acquit any officials from accusations of corruption and I do not differentiate between officials from Allawi's government and the current government. Illegitimate money has incredible satanic temptation; neither officials nor average citizens can resist the lure [of corruption] except for those whom God has blessed with mercy.

"It is not right to politicize accusations of corruption and make them a tool for political conflicts. For instance, the government has suddenly discovered that there is corruption in the Ministry of Defense, worth unprecedented amounts of money, and yet the former Minister of Defense is the only official implicated in this case. We all know that Al-Ja'afari's government has assumed power and been working for several months. Without a doubt, it has responsibility for everything and it knows all of the details about the former government's performance so why hasn't the current government raised this serious issue before? Why has it decided to publicize this case now? What was the role of the Commission on Public Integrity during that time? I say this

because the former Minister of Defense, Hazem Al-Sha'lan, is preparing for the coming election and the rivalry has already begun.

"As I said before I do not want to accuse or acquit anyone--all officials are equal to me [as a private citizen]. But, the timing of this case and the current exaggeration by local media outlets have made us doubt the veracity and independence of the Commission on Public Integrity. It seems that the government has turned this commission into a political tool to get rid of its political opponents and win another term in the upcoming election. If the case was associated with known facts, I would have been the first one to support this accusation but how can we know the facts amid hazy circumstances?

"Anyway, we should not forget Christ's saying: 'Let he who is without sin cast the first stone.' We wish that [character] defamation would not be used as a weapon in the electoral battle because this act will only ignite political accusations. Consequently, this will lead to a revelation of what is behind the scenes and may force some political groups from the political process."

#### C. "Ramadan and the Patience of Iraqis"

(Al-Siyada, independent, published this front-page editorial by Sa'ad Assam Al-Janabi)

"It's the third Ramadan since the downfall of the former regime and the Iraqi people's sufferings have only increased, their hopes destroyed by the security chaos and the decline of essential services. In this holy month, we have to perform our religious duties in addition to our national duties.

"In this holy month we will witness a democratic practice, the referendum, which we must participate in as a national duty. In spite of our reservations on some articles and paragraphs within the constitution we call on all Iraqis to actively participate in their national right to freely express their opinion--it is up to Iraqis to accept or reject the constitution. The most important thing is that they must participate in promoting the political process so that mistakes of the previous election will not happen again. This way, we will have a fully legitimate referendum and election that leads to a national government that satisfies all Iraqi's ambitions.

"The Iraqi government is responsible for providing a suitable environment to make the referendum and election successful. It must ensure that all Iraqis take part in this process so that we can have a newly elected National Assembly that represents all Iraqis. To achieve this, we must depend upon God and remember the virtues of this holy month. First of all, cities must not be attacked and bombed--injured citizens must be compensated. All random raids on houses must be stopped and there needs to be a legal way to implement security procedures. All detainees must be released and we must achieve national reconciliation. In addition, we need to put an end to the continuous bloodshed in Iraq in order to put Iraq on the correct path to establish democracy and justice. Iraqi patience is at an end and it is now time for the Iraqi people to harvest the fruits of their sacrifices and endurance."

#### D. "An Invitation to End Terrorism in Iraq"

(Al-Ittihad, affiliated with the PUK, published this page-five editorial by Dr. Ahmad Abdullah)

"After the downfall of the dictatorial regime on the ninth of April 2003, Iraq has witnessed many brutal crimes. The Americans and their Iraqi allies who came with them must be held responsible for the consequences of those crimes because it is they who have let terrorists enter Iraq easily and freely. Now, every day we see Iraqi blood shed and hundreds of men, women, children, and elderly being killed in markets, streets, and houses. The intentional killing of innocent citizens indicates that those killers and criminals do not know the meaning of mercy and I think that the smell of blood excites their antagonistic instincts.

"We do not know if those killers realize that they will definitely go to hell. Moreover, some Iraqis label those murderers 'resistance.' Can we regard the killing of innocent, unarmed civilians as resistance? Can we regard attacks on police and other security forces resistance? The march of freedom and democracy moves forward in Iraq because Iraqi martyrs have enabled it through their martyrdom. On the other hand, some neighboring countries are still supporting terrorists in Iraq. But, God will punish those who harm Iraq and the Iraqi people will never forget the stances these countries took. In the end, only terrorists will be the losers because their operations are condemned in life and they will be punished on the Day of Judgment. At the same time, the Iraqi people have become aware of the necessity to unite to fight these killers.

"This is a battle between good and evil. For this reason, let us all fight terrorists because there is no place for

terrorists and occupiers in Iraq, which is the land of prophets and imams [esteemed clerics]. The upcoming stage will be sensitive and complicated, therefore we have to be very positive and our citizens must be united in order to counter the brutal and hysterical terrorist attacks against our country. We have to cooperate with the security forces to inform against any terrorist suspects. In addition, we must say 'yes' to the constitution which we will be able to amend in the future should we have reservations about it."

**E. "In American English"**

(Al-Zaman, independent, anti coalition, published this page-four column by Dr. Kadum Al-Mukdadi)

"If I were an Iraqi-American journalist who lived in Manhattan for a long time, I would have suggested that the occupation forces present a daily television show entitled, 'In American English.' I am sure I would be able to find many Americans who are fed up with American democracy and are tired of the [American] political game in Iraq.

"When hurricanes hit the United States and the Bush administration proved ineffective at containing the disaster, we could make use of this event in one of our evening shows. President Clinton said that there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, as Bush claimed; moreover, Clinton critiqued Bush's inability to deal with the damage of the hurricane. In Iraq, there are some people (especially in the city of Fallujah) who believe that what happened in the United States represents God's retribution for the American attack on their city. A displaced citizen from Samara said while he was watching millions of Americans flee their cities after Hurricane Katrina, that it was God's penalty for what they did to the Iraqis. I am sure that citizens of Al-Qa'im, Tal-Afar and Dulu'aya would say the same thing.

"I don't think anyone in the world can prevent impoverished people from showing delight in the misfortune of the American people. And it's American shamelessness and disrespect for other countries that has created this hatred. Through one of his impudent statements, Bush told the American people that [by waging war in Iraq] he was able to keep the battle against terrorism isolated from the United States and sequestered here in Iraq. This means that he brought destruction to our land at the expense of our people and our country. All this happens and there are still some new politicians who say that there is a difference between the occupation and terrorism. In fact, the occupation and terrorism are two faces of the same coin.

"What happened in Basrah [the incident with the British military] is an example of the democracy [practiced on behalf] of the occupation. This democracy destroys police stations and insults the local Iraqi government. But, I think we have to demand: a democratic apology, democratic submission and democratic humiliation."

**F. "Another Definition of Democracy"**

(Al-Dustoor, independent, published this front-page editorial by Bassem Al-Sheikh)

"Every day we explore new definitions and the new charming qualities of democracy, especially when it reaches the decisive stage when the impoverished and underprivileged segments of society decide the fate of their prominent leaders--who have to follow one of two paths to gain the votes of the population. The first is to win the hearts of the people who, despite their simple nature, know only too well that it is nothing more than an attempt to achieve their political goals and then to discard promises after reaching power.

"The second and the most important is to expose the dirty laundry of their opponents and to lower their standing in the eyes of their supporters. Usually this starts with the electoral campaigning period during which, friends of yesterday become the enemies of today, while today's adversaries become allies and partners.

"Here, experience, aggression, and rudeness have a great role to play, and usually in this period those with noble principles and honorable behavior who have no desire to indulge in filthy contests withdraw and fail--while those that have nothing on their mind other than the calculations of gaining power are the ones who emerge victorious. Democracy is the brush that removes corrosion and reveals the true metal from which men are forged."

SATTERFIELD